

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. – 35. (Canceled)

36. (Previously Presented) A process for producing superfine particles comprising superfine pulverizing a β -glucan derived from a water extract of a mushroom, wherein the superfine particles have an average particle diameter of 10 μm or less, as determined in the form of a dispersion in water, wherein said superfine pulverizing includes preparing particles having an average particle diameter of 10 μm or less by mixing a dispersant with an aqueous solution containing said β -glucan derived from said water extract of a mushroom.

37. – 38. (Canceled)

39. (Currently Amended) The process according to ~~claim 38~~ claim 36, wherein said water extract of a mushroom is obtained by filtering a water extract of a mushroom or hot-water extract of a mushroom.

40. (Original) The process according to claim 36, wherein said superfine pulverizing includes preparing particles having an average particle diameter of 1 μm or less.

41. (Original) The process according to claim 40, wherein said preparing particles having an average particle diameter of 1 μm or less comprising treating the particles with a high-pressure emulsifier.

42. (Previously Presented) A process for producing a composition containing superfine particles comprising superfine pulverizing a β -glucan derived from a water extract of a mushroom, wherein the superfine particles have an average particle diameter of 10 μm or less, as determined in the form of a dispersion in water, wherein said superfine pulverizing includes preparing particles having an average particle diameter of 10 μm or less by mixing a dispersant with an aqueous solution containing a β -glucan derived from a water extract of a mushroom.

43. (Canceled)

44. (Currently Amended) The process according to ~~claim 43~~ claim 42, wherein said water extract of a mushroom is obtained by filtering a water extract of a mushroom or hot-water extract of a mushroom.

45. (Original) The process according to claim 42, wherein said superfine pulverizing includes preparing particles having an average particle diameter of 1 μm or less.

46. (Original) The process according to claim 45, wherein said preparing particles having an average particle diameter of 1 μm or less comprising treating the particles with a high-pressure emulsifier.

47. – 90. (Canceled)

91. (New) The process according to claim 36, wherein the superfine particles are prepared by fine pulverizing treatment comprising mixing a high-pressure emulsifier with an aqueous solution containing said β -glucan derived from said water extract of a mushroom and subjecting the composition after mixing to an emulsifying pressure of at least 800 kgf/cm².

92. (New) The process according to claim 91, wherein said high-pressure emulsifier is lecithin.

93. (New) The process according to claim 42, wherein the superfine particles are prepared by fine pulverizing treatment comprising mixing a high-pressure emulsifier with an aqueous solution containing said β -glucan derived from said water extract of a mushroom and subjecting the composition after mixing to an emulsifying pressure of at least 800 kgf/cm².

94. (New) The process according to claim 93, wherein said high-pressure emulsifier is lecithin.